



# Southern Water: Kent update

2 December 2025

# Today's agenda



- Welcome and company update
- Wastewater winter readiness
- Wastewater infrastructure investment across Kent
- Water: How we're responding to drought
- Clean Rivers and Seas Task Force
- Closing words





# Company update

Tim McMahon, Managing Director of Water

# Eastbourne beads: What has happened

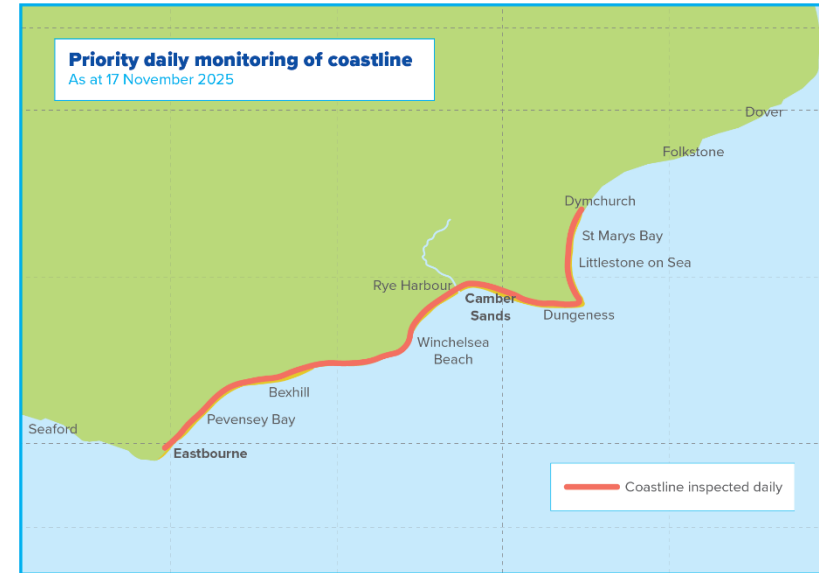
- On 29 October, up to 10 tonnes of plastic beads used in wastewater treatment were released from the Eastbourne Treatment Works and entered the sea via a 3.4km long outfall pipe. Beads began to wash up on Camber Sands beach during the week of 3 November. After initial reports that the beads had originated from shipping, on 10 November we confirmed the beads came from our site.
- This is a rare and extremely serious occurrence. We are very sorry for the impact it has had and completely understand the anger and anxiety it has caused to communities along the affected coast.
- We are determined to do all we can to put things right; we are paying for the clean-up, and we recognise this is a long-term, substantial commitment.



# Eastbourne WTW beads: Next steps



- Southern Water teams, including specialist contractors, continue to support the clean-up effort at Camber Sands, working with Rother District Council, which is leading this work. We remain committed to supporting this work in every way we can.
- We've also committed to an independent investigation into the cause, have commissioned expert advice relating to the longer-term impact, and are working closely with the Environment Agency as part of the clean-up and environmental response.





# Our Business Plan: 2025 to 2030



- **BACKGROUND:** In December 2024 we received our Final Determination from Ofwat for the regulatory period April 2025 – March 2030
- After very careful consideration, our board decided to appeal the Final Determination to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)
- Our argument was that Ofwat's Final Determination would not enable us to deliver the environmental and performance improvements and new infrastructure that our customers and communities rightly expect



# CMA appeal – where we are now



- On Thursday 9 October 2025, the CMA published its Provisional Determination on our 2025-2030 business plan.
- We reviewed the CMA's Provisional Determination, and responded to it on 11 November.
- The CMA is due to issue its Final Determination in the near future.
- The CMA appeal process does not hinder plans for 2025-26: these are being delivered as laid out in our Business Plan.
- We will keep you updated in the coming weeks.





# Wastewater: Winter readiness

Floyd Cooper, Programme Manager, Wastewater Networks

Paul Riordan, Head of Wastewater Treatment



# Winter Readiness – Sewer Networks in Kent

## Groundwater Preparation Highlights



**Groundwater Health Checks** and **Wet Well Cleans** across all **12** Kent Groundwater wastewater pumping stations to ensure optimal performance and resilience through Winter

Critical spares stocked for all **12** sites to enable **fast effective maintenance and response**

**10** site specific **Tankering Plan Documents** created for sites in Kent to help reduce customer impact and highway's damage in rural areas

A **structured comms plan** in progress which will see **proactive weekly site-specific updates** to the Parish Councils of any villages impacted by groundwater flooding and/or mitigation measures

Completion of the final stage of the **Alkham Valley sewer lining** capital delivery project. Total sewers lined approximately **1400m**

**Targeted, operations-led Sewer lining** interventions completed at **Hawkhurst** and **The Derings, Lydd** to tackle Groundwater infiltration hot spots

The introduction of several new Kent boreholes to our brand-new **Groundwater Forecasting Dashboard** for improved visibility and analysis



# Winter Readiness – Kent

## Optimising our wastewater network



- A new contract with Flow Management Solutions Ltd has been confirmed, which brings measurable benefits to our groundwater operation.
- This will deliver efficiency in our tankering operations, meaning less vehicles on the road and in our villages.
- This partnership also enhances health and safety and strengthens customer awareness and engagement.



# Winter readiness – wastewater treatment



Our winter readiness programme includes a 45-point check per site, to ensure we are resilient.



Checks range from making sure our backup generators are working as they should in case of an emergency, to ensuring the site is gritted and staff are safe.



Gritting is crucial for staff safety but also ensuring tankers can get on/off sites collecting/removing sludge, ensuring our sites remain compliant.



Continuing to work with the Environment Agency to push more flow through sites which have additional capacity, to reduce storm spills and the impact of groundwater.



**Swalecliffe WTW**



# Wastewater Capital Investment across Kent

Simon Tomlinson

During AMP8 (2025-2030) we are investing £678m, which includes:

## Network Projects (£63m)

- Growth £23m (Ebbsfleet £6m), Rising Mains £19m (3 partial replacements and 2 new)

## Treatment Enhancement (£476m)

- Nutrients £287m (Ashford £26m, Sellindge £25m, May Street £23m, Tonbridge £23m), Spill Reduction (CSO) Swalecliffe £75m

## Treatment Growth (£53m)

- Northfleet £21m, Dymchurch (£9m), Watlingtonbury (£7m)

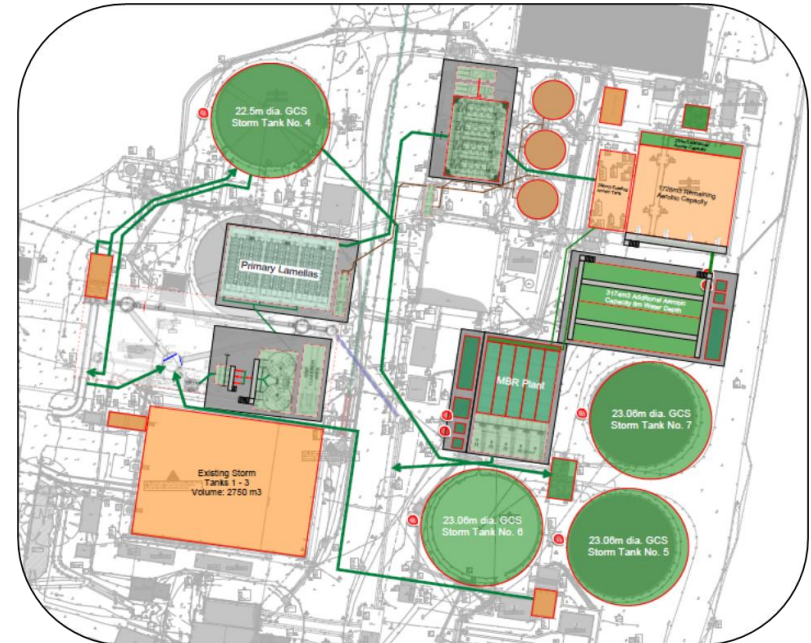
## Bio-Resources (£53m)

- Combined Heat & Power asset replacement (Ashford & Motney £6m), Cake Storage £17m



# Swalecliffe CSO Project

- Flow to Full Treatment (FFT) increasing from 205l/s to 450l/s, plus additional storage of up to 10,000m<sup>3</sup>
- Membrane Bioreactor (MBR) plant to remove viruses as well as solids from the final effluent
- Large variation in flow requires a complex process solution, due to limited available space within Swalecliffe WTW.
- Minor, enabling works (trial holes, electrical surveys etc.) will start in February 2026.
- Planning and applications likely to take 6 to 8 months from Q1 2026.
- Final project completion likely to be 2029/30.





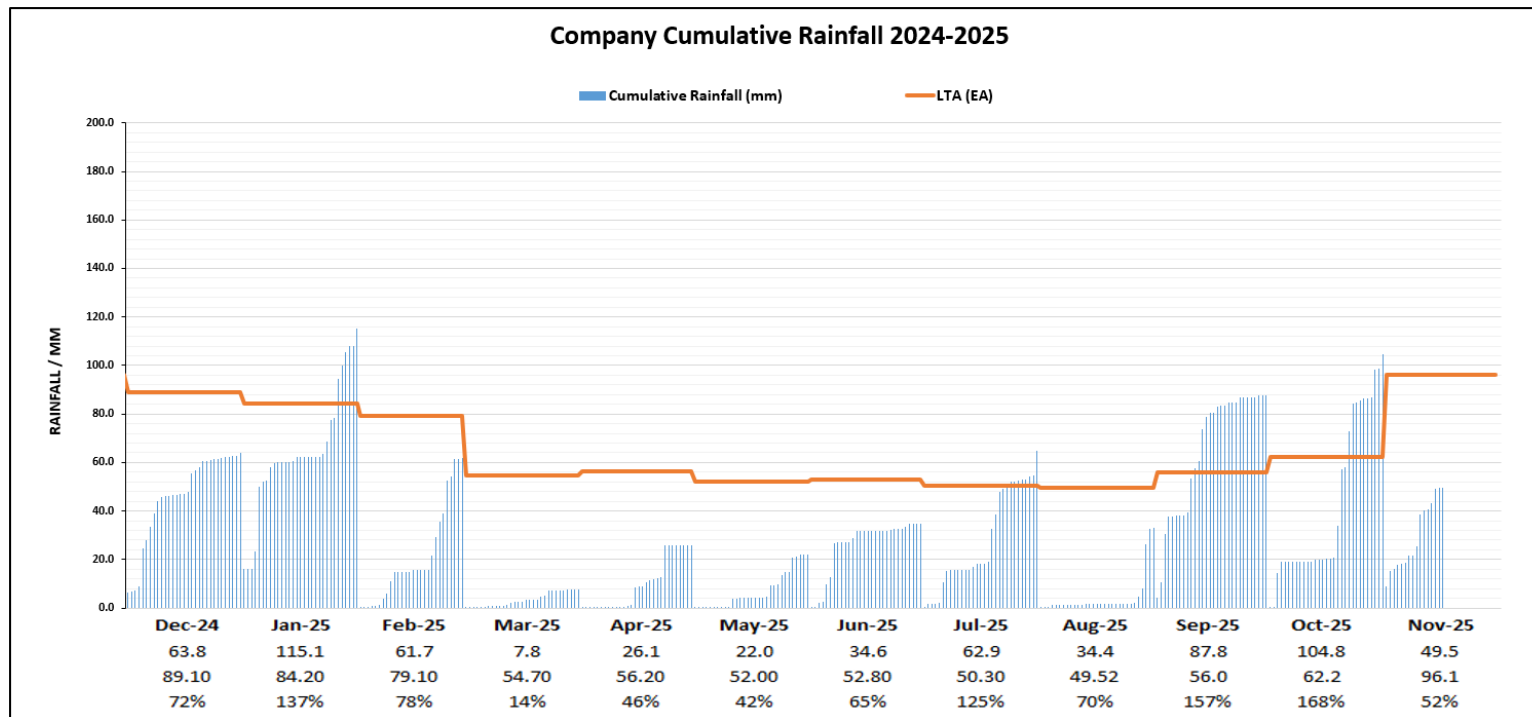
# Water: How we're responding to drought

Tim Taylor, Drought, Water Resource Policy and Regulation Manager

Benedict Sansom, Water Resources Planning Manager

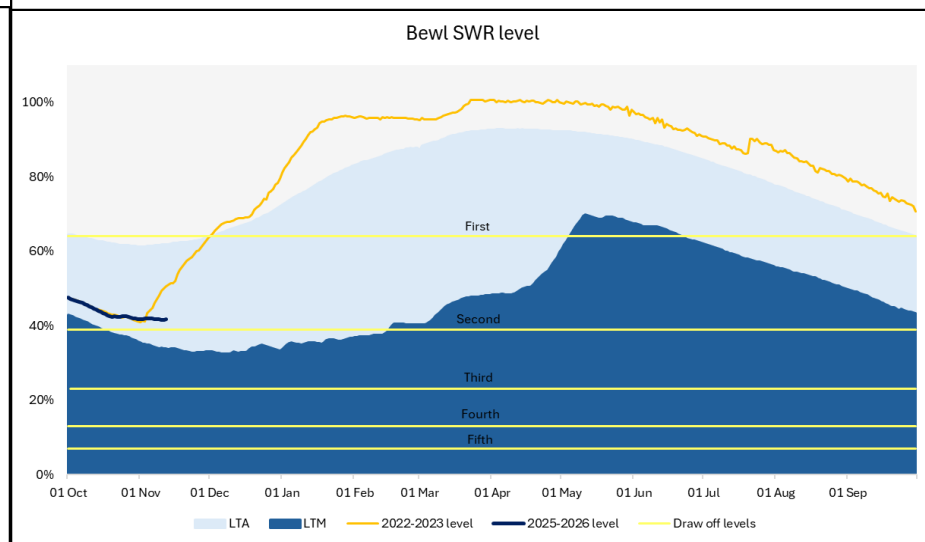
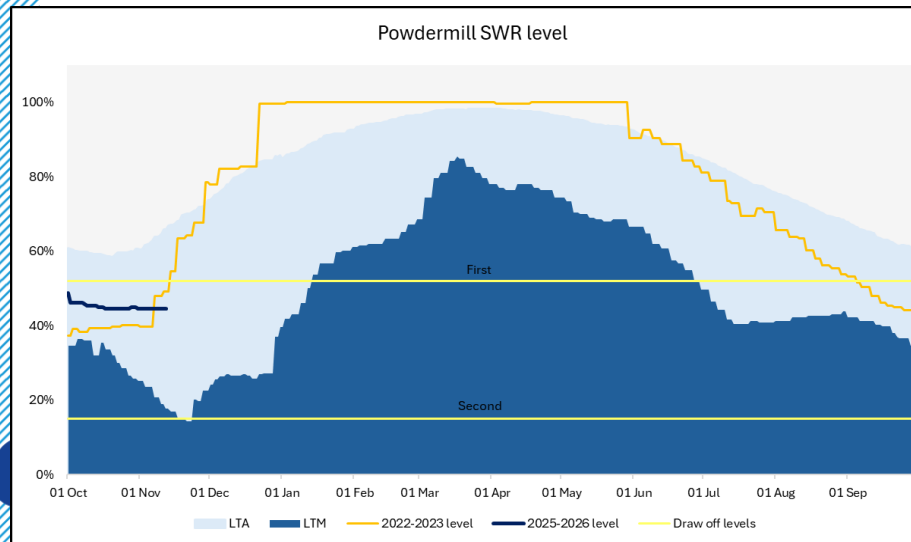
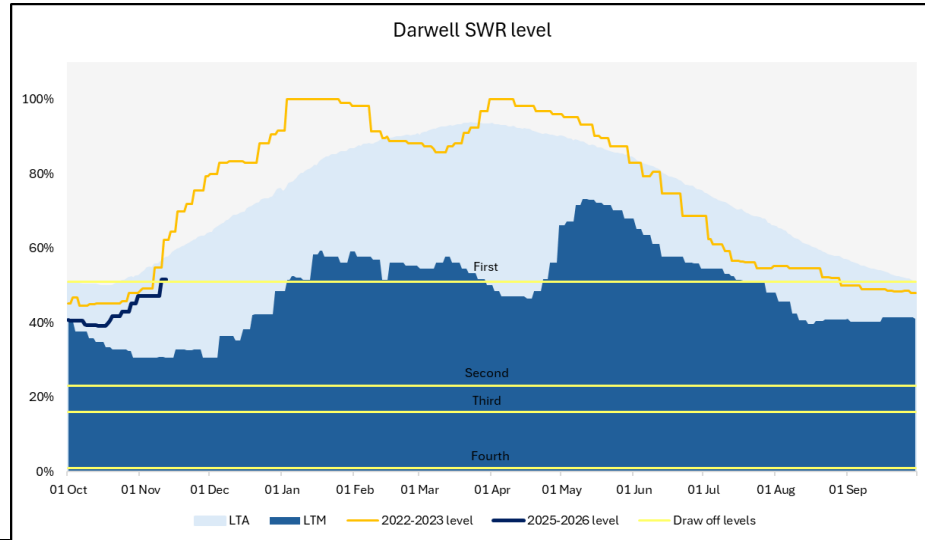
# Record Breaking Dry Weather

- Summer 2025 rainfall averaged at 62% of Long Term Average (LTA).
- March – May recorded 630 hours of sunshine, breaking previous records.
- Driest Spring in over 100 years and the warmest June on record.
- 4 Summer Heatwaves recorded, with Faversham peaking at 35.8°C
- By August, the whole of the South East of England was declared as “pro-longed dry weather”.



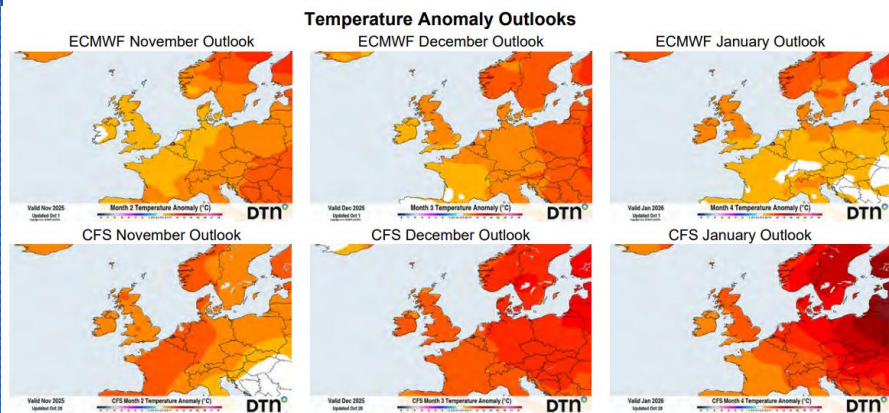
# Reservoir Recovery Vs. 2022

- Darwell
  - Storage capacity – 4,604ML
  - Current Level – 51.5%
- Bewl
  - Storage capacity – 31,300ML
  - Current Level – 42%
- Powdermill
  - Storage capacity – 856ML
  - Current Level – 45%

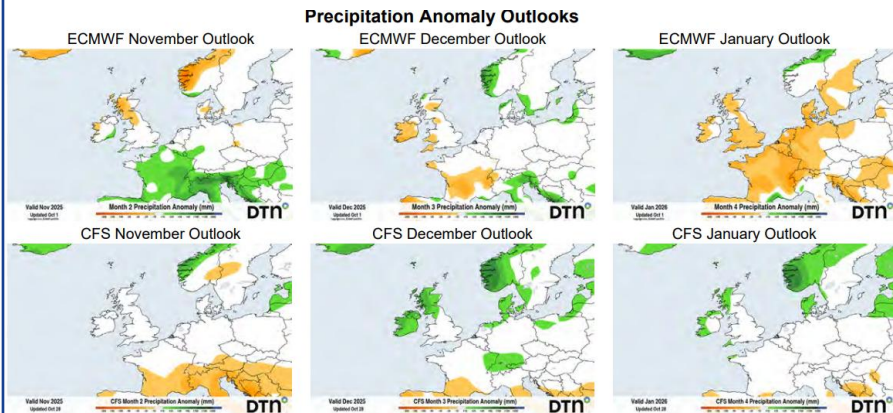


# Latest weather forecast

## Temperature Outlook November, December, January



## Precipitation Outlook November, December, January



### Early Winter Outlook:

- **Temperatures:** Both major climate models (ECMWF and CFS) predict a warmer-than-usual start to winter across most of Europe. The strongest warmth is expected in far eastern and far northern/northeastern regions. This warmer trend is likely to last through the next three months. Western and northwestern Europe may see more ups and downs, but overall, the CFS model suggests it will be warmer than the ECMWF model.
- **Rainfall:** November looks wetter than normal, especially according to the ECMWF model. For December and January, ECMWF leans drier than CFS. Overall, confidence in the rainfall forecast is low, meaning conditions could vary.

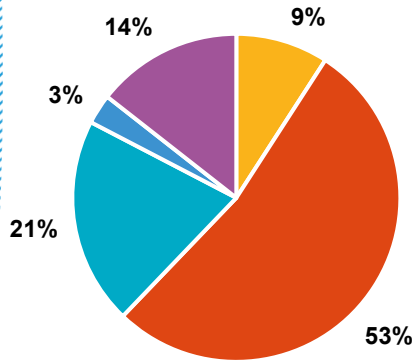
\*Southern Water uses DTN weather forecasting services



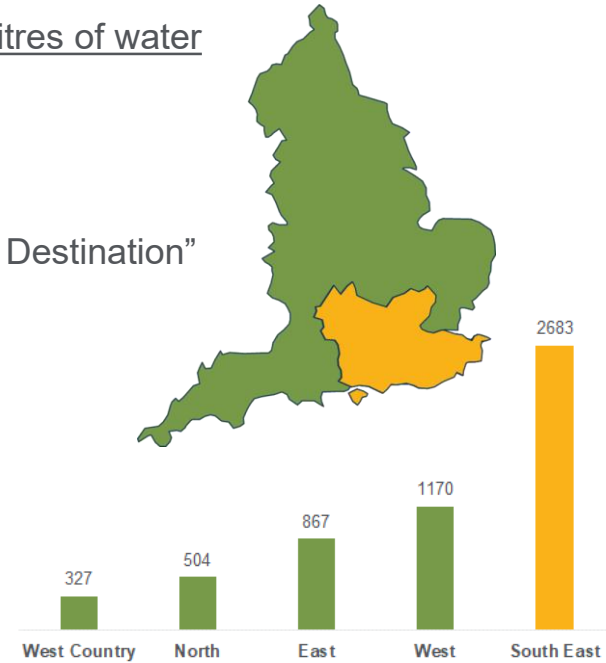
# The South East of England is seriously water-stressed



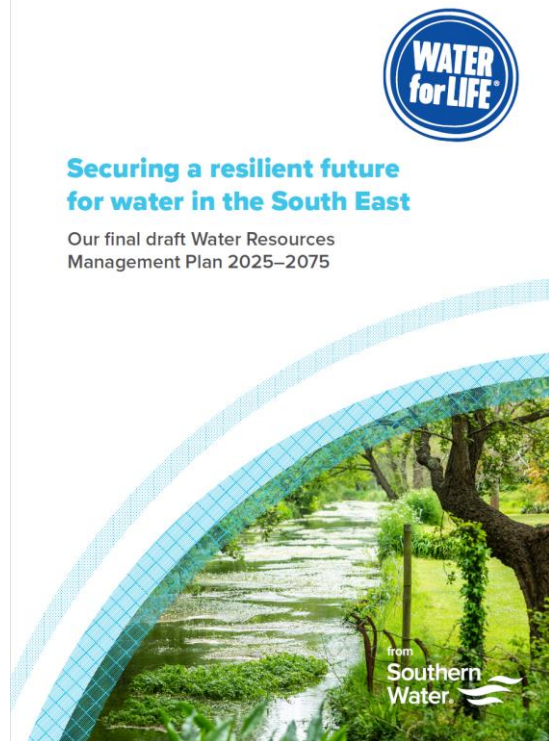
- The Environment Agency has identified that by 2050, almost 5 billion extra litres of water will be required every day, to maintain public water supplies in England.
- More than half that need is in the South East.
- The main driver in the South East is what the EA defines as “Environmental Destination” which means improving and enhancing the natural world.



- Climate Change
- Environmental Destination
- Household Population Growth
- Business Growth
- Drought Resilience



# Final Draft WRMP24 Update



- Public consultation finished in December 2024.
- Final draft WRMP24 and Statement of Response submitted to Defra on 30 May 2025.
- Awaiting final regulatory review.
- AMP8 started in April 2025.

# Draft WRMP29 Update



- EA published draft guidance for consultation in October 2025.
- Unconstrained options assessment started. Deadline December 2026.
- Public consultation planned for 2028.

## Water resources planning guideline

For consultation

# Drought Plan 2027 Update



- Drought Plan 2022 published in August 2025
- Pre-consultation ended 31 October 2025
- DP27 draft deadline – 31 March 2026
- Public consultation – Summer 2026
- Final publication – March 2027
- Emergency Drought Plan development.





# Clean Rivers and Seas Task Force: What we're doing in Kent

Jon Yates, Head of Delivery – Clean Rivers and Seas Task Force

Phil Cresswell-Nash, Bathing Water Partnership Manager



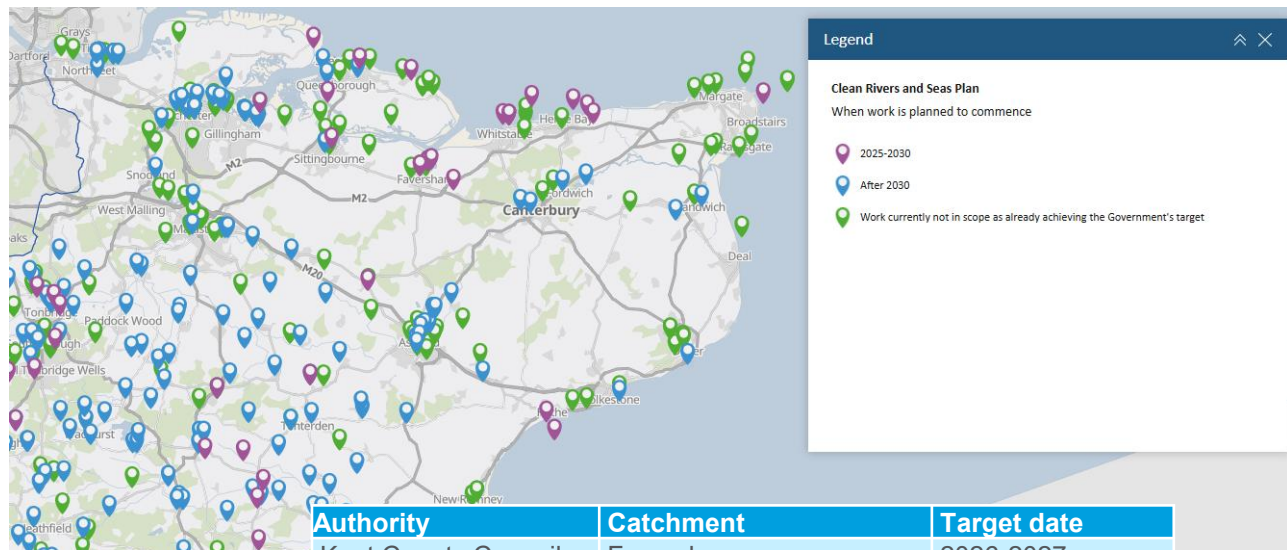
# Overflows in Kent

## Key stats

- 68 Overflows working on before 2035
- 57 Overflows working on between 2025-2030

- 27 Overflows require implementation of SuDS 2025-2030
- 4 Overflows require implementation of SuDS 2030-2035

**Storm Overflow Reduction Plan:**  
Areas we're working in between  
2025-30



# Our immediate focus: 2027 Regulatory targets



Areas we're targeting



## Catchments

- Faversham
- Herne Bay
- Queenborough
- Sittingbourne
- Whitstable

Why we're focusing on these locations



## Storm overflow prioritisation: Government and Regulatory targets

- Shellfish waters
- Environmentally sensitive sites
- Bathing waters

# What we've done in recent months

**Centaur:** Using AI to improve our sewer network in Whitstable. Our system went live on October. The forecast spill for Storm Amy was 4hrs 25 mins, and the actual spill duration was 19 mins.



Diverted a **surface water line in Court Street, Faversham** which was connected to our foul network.

It now discharges correctly into a surface water line, removing 0.15 Ha from our sewer.



# What we've done in recent months

## Sealing sewers in Sittingbourne to reduce infiltration

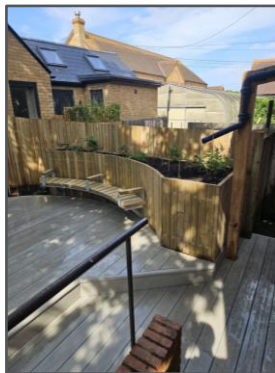
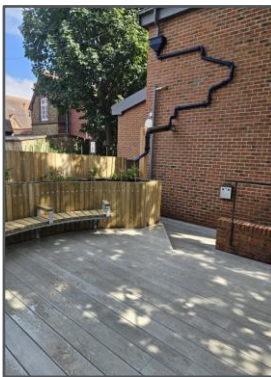


Before Sealing



The same sewer after sealing

## Completed Phase 1 of SuDS at Whitstable Library



**Working in partnership with Faversham Creek Trust** to investigate dredging opportunities for part of the creek, which will clear access for surface water removal.

# Kent Bathing Water Classifications 2025



Bathing water	2024	2025	Change
Botany Bay, Broadstairs	Excellent	Excellent	-
Broadstairs, Stone Bay	Good	Good	-
Broadstairs, Viking Bay	Good	Good	-
Deal Castle	Poor	Good	↑↑
Dymchurch	Poor	Poor	-
Folkestone	Sufficient	Sufficient	-
Herne Bay	Excellent	Excellent	-
Herne Bay Central	Sufficient	Good	↑
Hythe	Excellent	Excellent	-
Joss Bay, Broadstairs	Excellent	Excellent	-
Leysdown	Good	Good	-
Littlestone	Poor	Poor	-
Margate Fulsam Rock	Excellent	Excellent	-
Margate The Bay	Excellent	Good	↓
Minnis Bay, Birchington	Excellent	Excellent	-

Bathing water	2024	2025	Change
Minster Leas	Good	Excellent	↑
Ramsgate Sands	Excellent	Excellent	-
Ramsgate Western Undercliffe	Good	Excellent	↑
Sandgate	Excellent	Excellent	-
Sandwich Bay	Good	Good	-
Sheerness	Excellent	Excellent	-
St Margaret's Bay	Excellent	Excellent	-
St Mary's Bay (Kent)	Sufficient	Sufficient	-
St Mildred's Bay, Westgate	Excellent	Good	↓
Tankerton	Excellent	Excellent	-
Walpole Bay, Margate	Good	Good	-
West Bay, Westgate	Sufficient	Sufficient	-
West Beach, Whitstable	Good	Excellent	↑
Westbrook Bay, Margate	Excellent	Excellent	-

Across Kent, there are 29 designated bathing waters and 83% of these are classified as either 'Excellent' or 'Good'.

This year's classifications has seen five bathing water classifications improve, with two out of 29 declining.



# Bathing Water: What we've done recently and what is next



## Completed recently

- **Sewer rehab programme:** CCTV surveys on the public foul sewers, resulting in 112m of sewer repairs in West Bay Westgate, Deal, Dymchurch and Folkestone.
- **Illegal Connections:** 12 illegally connected properties identified and resolved across Kent, including four toilets.
- **Sewer Cleaning:** Over 1,000 meters of surface water sewer cleaning completed in Deal to enable illegal connection investigations to continue.

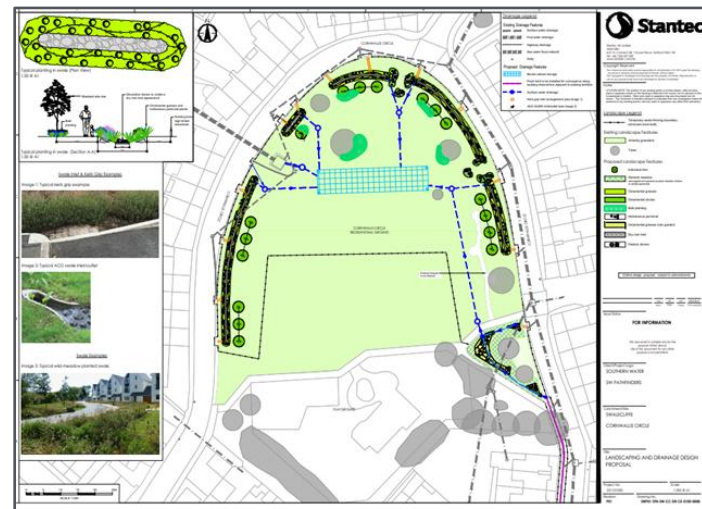
## What is next

- Continuing our Bathing Water Improvement Plan, with focused investigations in Littlestone.
- Sewer rehab programme continues in Folkestone and Deal.
- Yellow fish Campaign scheduled to take place in Deal and Walmer in 2026 in collaboration with partners.
- Annual Deal Pier survey agreed with Dover District Council
- Continuing our engagement with key bathing water community steering groups



# In the coming months...

- Continuing to improve Queenborough WTW, as we **repurpose an old tank into a storm tank**, which will provide more stormwater capacity on site.
- Ongoing collaboration with Kent County Council and Medway Council to **progress our Highway SuDS programme**.
- SuDS in Cornwallis Circle, Whitstable** to slow the flow of 1.2Ha. Detailed design complete, subject to council agreement.
- Detailed investigations** in 2027 and 2030 catchments, to ensure we're providing the right solutions for each area.





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# Appendix



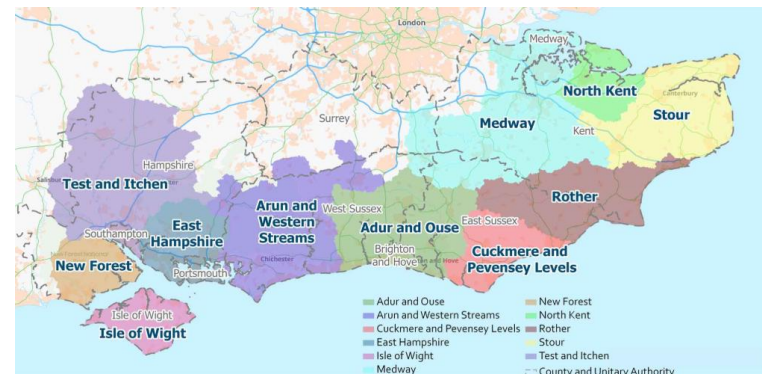


# Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP)

# Be part of our second DWMP



- Work has started on our second Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP), which set out our plans for investment in drainage and wastewater services.
- This is to ensure our networks of sewers, pumps and wastewater treatment works meet the needs of our customers and protect the environment into the future. It is now a Statutory Plan, sitting alongside our Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) and it will be used to inform our future Business Plans.
- We want to work with all local authorities to protect and improve the environment and take account of all issues relating to flooding, drainage, growth and climate change for the benefit of the communities we serve.
- In January 2025 we're hosting webinars to explain the DWMP process and we're starting to contact the relevant council officers.





# Leakage performance in Kent

# Leakage in Kent



## Total leak repairs 2023/24

	Kent
Bursts	583
Customer leaks	705
Network leaks	6165
Total	6870

## Total leak repairs 2024/25

	Kent
Bursts	477
Customer leaks	901
Network leaks	5066
Total	5967

## Total leak repairs Apr 25 to date

	Kent
Bursts	318
Customer leaks	936
Network leaks	4565
Total	5819



# Community Centre Grants

# Supporting Community Centres across our region



## Our Community Centre Grants

As part of our programme to support making the community stronger, our Community Centre Grants are back for a fourth year.

## Focused grant allocation

Concentrating resources on five key areas; Chatham, Folkestone, Eastbourne, Bognor & Southampton, this approach ensures meaningful impact and supports communities facing significant challenges.

## Sustainable community support

Providing deeper, sustainable assistance to community centres strengthens vital lifelines in our community.

## Measuring impact and accountability

Narrowing focus allows better measurement of outcomes, ensuring transparency and accountability in grant allocation.

## Maximising Impact

The approach aims to enhance resilience, trust, and operational efficiency for maximum social benefits.





# How to apply



## Application Timeline

Applications open on 1 December and close on 15 December, with announcements in mid-January.

## Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must be independent community centres without local authority core funding and host a minimum of three weekly in-person activities and offer a wide range of services for the whole community.

## Call to Action

Encourages centres to apply now to strengthen sustainability and support resilient communities.

**Visit our website to find out more:**

[Community Centre Grants](#)



Apply now

Applications close on 15 December 2025.